

MCA course in IGNOU

2785. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of stipulated period for completion of MCA course in IGNOU;
- (b) whether in special circumstances of cases of students, competent authority is empowered to further extend period for completion of course by allowing them to re-appear in those unqualified papers;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether Government are of view to reconsider those cases where students have qualified all papers except one or two papers uncleared by one mark short in aggregate for allowing them to re-appear/awarding grace mark in related papers for saving academic career of students; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) As per the information furnished by IGNOU, the stipulated minimum period of its MCA Course is three years. However, the maximum duration of the MCA Course with pre-revised syllabus is seven years, whereas, the revised MCA Course, which was launched in January 2005, has a maximum duration of six years. In case of both the courses, the maximum duration is further extendable by another two years on payment of pro-rata fee for those courses, which were not successfully completed during the prescribed duration.

(d) and (e) The rules of the University provides for grace marks to the extent of 2% in term-end examination to those students, who failed to score requisite 40% marks in individual courses, subject to the condition that they have overall scored 50% marks in aggregate, which is a requirement to successfully complete the MCA Course.

Programmes to study Social Exclusion

2786. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government are funding programmes through the UGC to various universities and colleges to study Social Exclusion;

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(b) if so, the details of this funding, the amount of funds, the targeted colleges and the objectives;

(c) whether Social Exclusion will cover only one or two castes;

(d) the reasons for emphasizing Caste-specific funding by UGC; and

(e) the steps proposed to include minorities to caste-specific studies and funding and selection of educational institutions by UGC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. According to the information furnished by the University Grants Commission (UGC), the UGC has approved the Tenth Plan Guidelines for establishment of Centres in Universities for studies of Social Exclusion and inclusive policy with the following objectives:

- (i) Conceptualising discrimination, exclusion and inclusion based on caste/ethnicity and religion.
- (ii) Developing understanding of the nature and dynamics of discrimination and exclusion.
- (iii) Contextualising and problematising discrimination, exclusion and inclusion.
- (iv) Developing an understanding of discrimination at an empirical level.
- (v) Formulating policies for protecting the rights of these groups and eradicating the problem of exclusion and discrimination.
- (vi) Studying civil society movements — and efforts to overcome social exclusion.

The Commission invites proposals from different Universities on the above issues and has also constituted an Expert Committee to scrutinize and examine the proposals for according approval.

Manipulation in EVMs during assembly election of West Bengal

2787. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the electronic voting machines (EVMs), including the hardware and software, provided for conducting general